



Appendix 7 – Lynx Denning Concerns for Timber Harvest in Lynx Range

DNR's Denning Habitat strategy has three components: area, dispersion, and season. The strategy is based on the "best available," and thus designation as denning habitat is dynamic through the life of the plan.

DNR's denning area strategy addresses the quantity of habitat available within a LAU by maintaining a minimum of 10 percent of the lynx habitat as denning habitat in the four LAUs where DNR manages at least 20 percent of the habitat (Loomis SF and LPO Block). The 10 percent minimum follows recommendations by WDFW (1996) and is within the ranges historically occurring within the Methow River Basin (Table 4.2 in the 2006 Lynx Plan). Denning habitat designated to meet the 10 percent minimum area requirement is selected according to the following criteria:

- 1) stands with known den sites
- 2) late seral stands of spruce/fir or similar mesic association with denning structure on northerly aspects
- 3) late seral stands with denning structure on mesic associations with other aspects
- 4) late seral stands with denning structure on other associations

The denning habitat area has been surveyed and identified in the three Loomis LAUs, and surveyed in the Little Pend Oreille Block. Should some of the 10 percent be compromised by fire, pathogens, or other unforeseen events, new denning habitat can be added as indicated in the attached flowchart.

Denning structure includes deadfall with large-end diameters of 6 inches or greater, layered such that there is an average of >0.8 logs/yard over a 150 foot transect that are 1-4 feet off the ground. Deadfall includes upturned rootwads. Woody debris should cover the majority (75 percent) of a 5 acre patch. Examples of preferred denning structure conditions are depicted in the Lynx Habitat Field Reference Notebook (ILC 1999). According to the "best available" strategy, denning habitat will still be identified if site conditions do not match this definition, as indicated in the selection criteria. DNR recognizes the role of windthrow in providing material for future denning sites. In areas where denning habitat is scarce, sites with insect and/or disease mortality or other potential to provide future denning will be considered for denning habitat designation.

DNR's denning dispersion strategy of at least two 5-acre sites with denning structure per section (square mile) distributes denning habitat throughout the plan area. Dispersion is believed to be important to lynx. Dispersion of den sites also minimizes the chance that all denning habitat will be eliminated during a fire event, as does selection of sites with northerly aspects and low slope positions. In the case of a large fire or other catastrophic event (640 acres or more where 40 percent of the trees or volume die or are at risk of dying within 12 months of the event), designated denning habitat will still encompass the best available per section; that is, patches ≥ 5 acres with standing trees, snags, and woody debris will be maintained for denning habitat recruitment.

DNR's seasonal strategy includes avoiding the harvest of denning habitat during the denning season. The denning season for lynx is May 1 - July 30.

**Lynx denning concerns for timber harvest in lynx recovery area
(USFWS, 2002)**



